



## **NATIONAL WATERSHED COALITION**

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Statement of the National Watershed Coalition  
To Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
September 22, 2005

Mr. Secretary:

The National Watershed Coalition represents the Water Resource interests of Associations and organizations across the country who believe the watershed unit is the appropriate planning unit for Conservation and Environmental planning and implementation. We also believe that USDA's water resource programs, particularly those authorized by PL-534 and PL-566, represent some of the most useful and flexible water resource partnership based programs available.

The NWC will be observing and participating in the process which will result in a new farm bill. We are committed to seeing that the effort to rehabilitate aging water resources infrastructure continue with in the context of the farm bill. For several years we have carried the message that this effort is critical to the protection of life, property, human health and safety. We regret that it took a catastrophic flooding event in New Orleans and the gulf coast to sharpen the public's understanding of "protecting life, property and human health and safety". The protection provided across the country by these USDA programs has helped us avert many smaller but no less serious flooding catastrophes over the years.

The National Watershed Coalition urges the Department and the Administration as a whole to fully support the Watershed Rehabilitation efforts outlined in the coming farm bill. It makes good business sense to invest in rehabilitation to preserve the infrastructure which protects so much and so many citizens. Through protection of farm land and rural communities the rehabilitation effort boosts our opportunity for a strong agricultural economy. The health and safety benefits to our citizens improve the quality of life across this Country.

In closing it is important that as we pursue the farm bill that we not forget the necessity for the Department and the President to support the USDA Watershed Program. Both PL 534 and 566 have their own authorizing language. Each has a rich history of success. It is our hope that you will recognize and support these important tools to address conservation and water resource issues in 2006 and beyond.

Thank you,

Dan Sebert, Executive Director  
National Watershed Coalition